San Francisco
**HOUSING
ACTION
COALITION**

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April 14, 2005

Joint Policy Committee
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street, P.O. Box 2050
Oakland, CA 94607-4756

**RE: Adopt Livable Communities Platform as part of
Regional Transit Oriented Development Policy**

Dear Joint Policy Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the San Francisco Housing Action
Coalition – a coalition of 46 organizations advocating for
well-designed, well-located housing in San Francisco – to
support the MTC and Joint Policy Committee's steps toward
connecting land use to transit. However, we are concerned
that the proposed policy will not be effective. We voted
unanimously this week to <u>urge you to strengthen the policy
by adopting the Greenbelt-Alliance-endorsed Livable
Communities Platform</u>, which will help ensure good land use
around transit stations.

We are interested in this policy because we believe every
Bay Area resident deserves a safe, affordable home – and
too often Bay Area cities are not building their fair share of
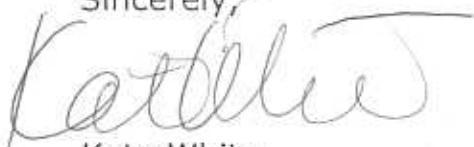housing where it makes sense: near transit.

We know that MTC is considering a policy that calls for a
certain amount of housing and jobs along transit corridors
as a measure for growth. While we applaud the focus on
housing, we are concerned that the proposed policy leaves
too much room for the possibility of poorly planned station
areas. Setting a combined threshold for housing and jobs
would allow cities to plan for offices and shops only, without
a balance of housing. Also, a policy without specific land
use and design guidelines could allow big-box stores and
excessive parking, which destroy the pedestrian and bike
environment. Furthermore, the current proposal does not
address the need for housing affordable to families earning
low incomes, the very people who need housing and use
transit most.

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We urge you to adopt the following Livable Communities Platform as part of a Regional Transit Oriented Development Policy. Before MTC funds transit expansion projects, cities should have to:

- Plan (or already have) a specified minimum level of housing density. At least half the new housing built in the Bay Area should be located in the half-mile radius station areas. Each city should provide for their fair share percentage of region's new housing.
- Promote affordable housing in station areas.
- Prohibit big-box developments in station areas.
- Create plans to minimize the space dedicated to parking in station areas.
- Develop bicycle and pedestrian plans for safe routes to and within station areas. Station area plans should provide pedestrian access at least every 500 feet.

We know that it is critical that MTC have the input and support of the public and local community groups on this issue. We are eager to support a policy linking transportation funds to land use, but urge you to please strengthen the policy by integrating the Livable Communities Platform.

Sincerely,

Kate White
Executive Director